

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01

PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 ACDA-19 IO-13 DPW-01 AID-20 OMB-01

DRC-01 /126 W

----- 071099

O 120957Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6499

SECDEF IMMEDIATE

CINCPAC IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS BANGKOK 14267

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, TH

SUBJECT: PRIME MINISTER THANOM ON U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE
IN THAILAND

FOLLOWING IS AN UNOFFICIAL USIS TRANSLATION OF REMARKS ON THE
U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND THAT PRIME MINISTER THANOM
KITTIKACHORN MADE DURING A SEPTEMBER 12 PRESS CONFERENCE:

1. KHUN BANYAT OF "BANGKOK POST" ASKS WHEN ANOTHER MEETING
WILL BE HELD FOR FURTHER WITHDRAWALS OF AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES,
WHAT AMERICAN BASES WILL HAVE TO BE TURNED OVER TO THE
THAI GOVERNMENT AFTER THE NEXT WITHDRAWALS, AND THE EXACT
FIGURES OF MILITARY FORCES THAT HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN ALREADY.

2. REGULAR MEETING WILL BE HELD AT OFFICIAL LEVEL BETWEEN
THAILAND AND THE UNITED STATES FOR CONSIDERATION OF GRANDUAL
REDUCTION OF AMERICAN MILITARY FORCES IN THAILAND TO AN EXTENT
SUITABLE TO THE SITUATION. OFFICIALS OF BOTH SIDES HAVE NOT
FIXED A DEFINITE DATE AND TIME FOR THE NEXT MEETING YET. IN
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REGARD TO BASES WHICH THAILAND ALLOWED THE UNITED STATES TO

SET UP AND WHICH WILL HAVE TO BE TURNED OVER TO US. THERE IS THE AIRBASE IN NAM PONG ONLY AT THIS STAGE. A THAI OFFICAIL GROUP, COMPOSED OF OFFICIALS OF THE SUPREME COMMAND AND OF THE RTAF, ARE MAKING PREPARATIONS JOINTLY WITH AMERICAN OFFICIALS AND THIS MIGHT HAVE TO TAKE SEVERAL DAYS BECAUSE EVERYTHING THAT HAS TO BE TURNED OVER HAS TO BE LISTED AND CHECKED UPON.

3. IN REGARD TO THE NUMBER OF AMERICAN SEVICEMEN WHO MUST BE WITHDRAWN FROM THAILAND, IT IS EXPECTED THAT THE TOTAL NUMBER OF 3,650 MEN AGREED ON WILL BE COMPLETELY WITHDRAWN WITHIN THE PRESENTMONTH. THEIR WITHDRAWAL IS BEING CARRIED ON STEADILY BY UNITS, BUT THE WITHDRAWAL OF SOME UNITS MIGHT HAVE TO BE SLOW, SUCH AS SUPPORT PERSONNEL WHO HAVE TO COLLECT ARMAMENTS AND VARIOUS EQUIPMENT, THEN HAVE TO BE TRANSPORTED BY AIR BY INSTALLMENTSTHERE ARE 127 AMERICAN PLANES THAT HAVE TO BE WITHDRAWN UNDER AGREEMENTS REACHED ALREADY AND SOME OF THEM HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN ALREADY WHILE OTHERS ARE IN THE PROCESS OF BEING WITHDRAWN. THEY INCLUDE 113 VARIOUS KINDS OF PLANES AND FOUR HELICOPTERS, AS WELL AS TEN KC-135 JET TANKERS.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 12 SEP 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: n/a
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 JAN 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973BANGKO14267
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: BANGKOK
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730941/aaaabdwe.tel
Line Count: 82
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: martinjw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 04 OCT 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <04-Oct-2001 by maustmc>; APPROVED <07 FEB 2002 by martinjw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRIME MINISTER THANOM ON U.S. MILITARY PRESENCE IN THAILAND
TAGS: PFOR, TH
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005